10: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1945 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

291 roomy so that a man could squat down and pull his knees up inside the garment. Sometimes it was folded around the loins as its wearer squatted on the ground or mat. On cold mornings extra warmth was obtained by wrapping a blanket round the body, either a thick one of the same hand-woven cotton, or one of wool bought from some bazaar.

In the Toungoo Hills, the Bwè and other tribes usually wore a shorter smock, with all kinds and variations of stripes, which would hardly reach to their knees. They covered their legs with baggy Shan "bombies" or pants, usually black in colour.

291 For a number of years the Karens on the plains and
177 in the towns have worn the usual Burmese dress consisting of a *longyi* (skirt) with a white jacket in the warm weather and dark thick imported clothing in the cold.

562 The usual dress for the women has been the *longyi*,
291 worn over the lower part of the body and a shorter *hsay*
286 or smock over the upper part. The former was woven by the women themselves but the latter was often of imported cloth, usually black. Sometimes black velvet was used for the smock. Among the Sgaws the finest smocks were made of homespun black or dark blue cloth and were trimmed with rows of Job's Tears, the white seeds that grow readily in their plantations. Otherwise, bits of blue or red ribbon or strips of cloth were used for
● 301 ornaments. Often many strings of beads were wrapped
751 about the neck, some of which were supposed to have magical value to ward off evil spirits.

586 The women of the villages near Thandaung among
291 the Bwès, or Mopghas as they call themselves, wove very
178 elaborate skirts in which a number of colours were beauti-

[462]

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

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A Sgaw Karen Youth with His Harp
In the olden days every youth loved his harp and carried it with him constantly. On such instruments as these they played the accompaniments to their old epic "htas," which have been preserved for generations. The boar's tusk comb hangs down behind this boy's ear.

(iv)

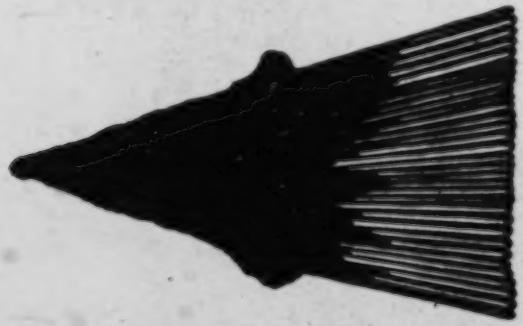
(Pp. i- iii are blank)

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1919) 1923 AF1 Burma
Karen AF7

at the bottom. The Red Karen, who take their name from their red garments, wear short breeches of red cotton and a short close-fitting tunic of the same color. These soon become the color of dirt from the generous accretions of that substance which adhere to them. These people use a blanket, which is red and white striped when new. They discard both the tunic and blanket in warm weather. Cotton is the most common material used, but in Toungoo silk is often used, either alone or with the cotton.

In Lower Burma, on the plains, it has become customary for the men to wear Burmese garments. The only time they put on their Karen garments, if they have them, is when they hold their "Bgha" feast. The different tribes to the east wear the Shan costume, with more or less variation, all the way to the Chinese Border.

The Karen men knot up their long hair on the top of the head or over the right or left ear, according to the custom of their particular locality, fastening it with a small triangular bamboo comb. No other head-dress is worn, except a piece of white muslin or other light-weight cloth, which may be put over the head as a turban or around it like a fillet, unless one should include the ornamental head-bands of the Karenni youth who, before marriage, wear necklaces of stones that have been handed down from father to son for generations, and ornaments for the head, neck, and ears, consisting of mother-of-pearl buttons interspersed with the shining wings of beautiful green beetles. All these are, however, given up at marriage and become the property of the bride.



A Karen Bamboo Comb

19; Marshall M-S (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

and the fulness tucked in at the waist line, thus allowing the action of the knees. The garment remains in place remarkably well, although no belt is used. When the women bathe—those on the plains doing so with much more regularity than their sisters in the hills—they bring the top of the skirt up under the armpits and fasten it over the breasts in the same manner as about the waist.

The jackets or smocks of the women present a variety of designs. The most common is the plain black or dark blue "hse" with little or no ornament on it. Sometimes it is decorated with small rosettes or stars of colored yarns or, among the Pwo, with fern-like figures. The prettiest decorations are made with the hard white seeds of various shapes of the plant called Job's Tears *(Coix)*. The variety mostly used are those resembling barberries, called "bwe" in Sgaw Karen and found all over the hills. These are sewed on the finished garment in parallel rows, in rows forming V-shaped figures, or in the forms of stars or rosettes and edging the arm and neck holes. Red yarns or pieces of red cloth are also sewed on to add to the ornamentation. In Shwegyin we often see a "hse" that is woven with elaborate designs of red and green on a black ground, red tape being sewed in vertical lines on the body of the garment and in horizontal lines over the shoulders. The head-dress of the women is called "hko peu ki" and among the Sgaw women consists of a piece of cloth about two yards long and a foot wide. The middle part is plain white. At either end there is a fancy woven ("u") portion about twenty inches long, red in color and crossed at intervals of two inches by transverse lines. In the middle of these colored ends is a white zigzag line representing a serpent. The other lines are in pairs, those equidistant from the zigzag above and below being alike and having their special designations. These names are, however, in archaic form, and their meaning is not well known. There are long white fringes on the ends of the head-dress and shorter colored ones at the ends of the cross lines. When worn, it is twisted about the head in such a way as to form a peak over the forehead with the colored fringes hanging down about the eyes and the long white fringes down the back. In a few villages in the Pegu Hills the women wear circlets ("hko hhlaw") of bamboo or silver, around which they coil their hair. The metal circlets are made of beaten silver a scant inch in width and long enough to go once and a half around the head, being held

19; Marshall M-6 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

by a fancy clasp at the back, which keeps the band in place. Such silver circlets are valued at about ten rupees or more, according to the work on them.

The Karen make blankets of the same cloth that they use for their garments. They use two strips of white edged with red sel-

WOMENS' HEAD DRESS

vedges, each piece being four yards long. These are sewed together lengthwise, and then one outer edge is sewed up to provide a half-open sleeping-bag. The fringes of the open end are drawn up over the head.

On the whole, the Karen are very careful about exposing their persons. The women have always worn the closed skirts and not the open "tamein," which was formerly in vogue among the Burmese. They seldom go without their jackets, though in the hills older women now and then leave them off. Little children run about more or less naked. Boys often find their garments a bother and

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

The wet garment is then pounded on a stone or soused up and down in the water a few times, and that is about all the laundering it gets. White jackets are washed out with soap and, in the towns, are given to the Indian washermen ("dhobies") for proper "doing up." 296

For protection from the rain the Karen use the wide-spreading fronds of the palm, which are nature's models for the paper umbrellas of the Chinese and Burmese. Workers in the paddy-fields make raincoats out of thatch woven on flexible bark fibre stays, which they tie across their shoulders. Three or four layers of the thatch make a protection that reaches to the knees. For a hat they tie a bit of palm leaf over the head, or wear a round umbrella-shaped hat like those made by the Shan and Burmese out of the sheathes of the cocoanut-palm or of bamboo. While transplanting rice on the plains a rain cover is made of these same sheathes or of tough large leaves covered with a network of thin bamboo splints bound with rattan. These covers are scoop-shaped and hang from the head down the back, causing a company of cultivators, bent over their work while wearing them, to look like long-legged tortoises wading in the mud. 292 287

Every Karen carries a bag ("hteu") slung over his shoulder as a part of his outfit. It is his pocket, in which he carries everything from money to the small game he has shot. The bag is woven in two parts. One, which forms the straps, consists of a strip from four to six inches wide and five or six feet long. Both ends are fringed. The other piece is from six to eight inches wide and from two to three feet in length. Each end of the long piece is folded lengthwise in the middle and sewed together, thus forming the corners of the bag. The short piece is folded crosswise in the middle and sewed to these corners or ends, thus forming the sides of the bag. The hemmed ends of the short piece form the edges of the mouth of the bag. The cloth woven for these bags is usually red with lengthwise stripes of white, yellow, or black. Different tribes have their different patterns and shades of color. The Karen do not ornament their bags so highly as do the Kachin tribes in Upper Burma. 415 286 301 ●

Every Karen woman and girl has some sort of a necklace. It may be a few seeds of the Job's Tears strung together, or some glass beads purchased from wandering peddlers, or silver beads made by Burmese silversmiths who visit the Karen villages during the dry season to pick up odd jobs. A common variety of beads is 301

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1923 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

made by pounding out little disks of silver and rounding them into beads, according to the shape of the disk. Some of these finished beads are an inch in length and half an inch in diameter at the middle, tapering off to almost a point at the ends. When strung they sometimes form chains so long that they encircle the neck several times and hang down over the bosom.

Bracelets of silver are, like the beads mentioned above, pounded out of coins (rupees) for the girls and young women, who not infrequently wear anklets of the same material. Even little boys sometimes wear silver bracelets and anklets.

Disks of silver, with rude figures of peacocks, elephants, and other Burmese figures, are often seen hanging from strings around the necks of children. Coins are also used in the same way. These are usually said to be simply for ornament, but I have occasionally wondered whether they might not have some magical purpose as well.

Among all the Karen tribes the most peculiar adornments are those of the Padaung women. These are rings of brass wire about a third of an inch in diameter, worn around the neck for the purpose of forcing up the chin and lengthening that member. As the process of elongation is slow, only a few rings are used at first; but as time goes on others are added, until the high metal collar thus formed consists of from twenty to twenty-five rings. The greater the length of the neck, the greater the beauty, they think. The appearance of these women is grotesque, for their heads appear abnormally small above their long necks; and their bodies, around which flap their loose garments, also seem disproportionate.[2] They can sleep only with their heads hanging over a high bamboo pillow, on which they rest their brass-armored necks. These rings are like those forming the brass corsets worn by the Iban women of Borneo, only the latter wear them lower down.

The Red Karen women wear, besides a profusion of beads around the neck, a girdle or many girdles of seeds and beads of various kinds and coils of lacquered rattans. These rattans are also worn as rings around the legs just above the calves. They often bulge out an inch or two from the leg and cause the women to walk with a stride "like a pair of compasses" and to experience some difficulty in sitting down. Indeed, it is necessary for them in sitting to stretch out the legs straight in front of them.[3] It

[2] *Gazetteer of Upper Burma*, Vol. I, Pt. I, p. 537.
[3] J. G. Scott, *Burma, A Handbook*, pp. 212, ff.

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
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s not uncommon to see similar garters, if one may call them so, worn by many of the Karen, but usually they are made of a few trands of rattan interwoven in a neat band of about half an inch

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A Padaung Couple—the Wife With Neck and Leg-rings

A large share of Padaung wealth is lavished on feminine attire. The brass rings around their legs and necks often weigh twenty pounds. This lady is not very stylish, for her neck has not been stretched enough. The longer the neck, the more attractive the lady.

n width. Some say that they wear these simply for ornament, and thers think that they find them useful in walking long distances. n fact these leg-bands perform somewhat the function of the rub- er stocking of the West.

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
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Among some of the Karen tribes to the east brass or oth wire rings are worn on the legs, either from the ankles up over t calves, or from the knees up the thighs, or with only one or tw rings at intervals on the legs. The arms are also more or less lad with brass circlets, as may be seen from Scott's description.*

Earrings are worn by both Karen men and women, b are usually in the form of plugs instead of rings. The silver e plug of the Sgaw resembles a spool with one end flaring out mo widely than the other. The larger end may be nearly two inch in diameter at the rim, tapering down to a little less than an in

WOMEN'S EARRINGS, HALF SIZE

in diameter where it joins the cylindrical part which fits the ho in the ear-lobe. The men wear plugs that have the ends covere over with a plate of silver, while the plugs worn by the wome are left open. Through these openings leaves or flowers are ofte inserted. Sometimes plugs made of a rolled strip of palm leaf f the holes in the ear-lobes, these holes being rarely more than a inch in diameter. When the holes for the ear plugs are in proces of being enlarged, the little rolls of palm leaf are as tightly wrappe and as large as possible when inserted. They then tend to looser and in so doing stretch the lobe. Sections of a stem of bambo are sometimes worn by hill people in the lobes of their ears o in the absence of anything else, a buttonaire of orchids or othe flowers found in the jungle. More than once have I seen orchid that would bring fancy prices in a Western city fringing the dirt face of some half-naked urchin.

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Karen men not uncommonly wear beads or strings about thei necks, besides other ornaments on their arms and legs. But per haps the ornament peculiar to them consists of the boar's tus comb, such as their ancestor, "Htaw Meh Pa," made after he ha killed the mythical boar. This is worn behind the ear, hangin down as a sort of earring. The comb, which is not unlike th

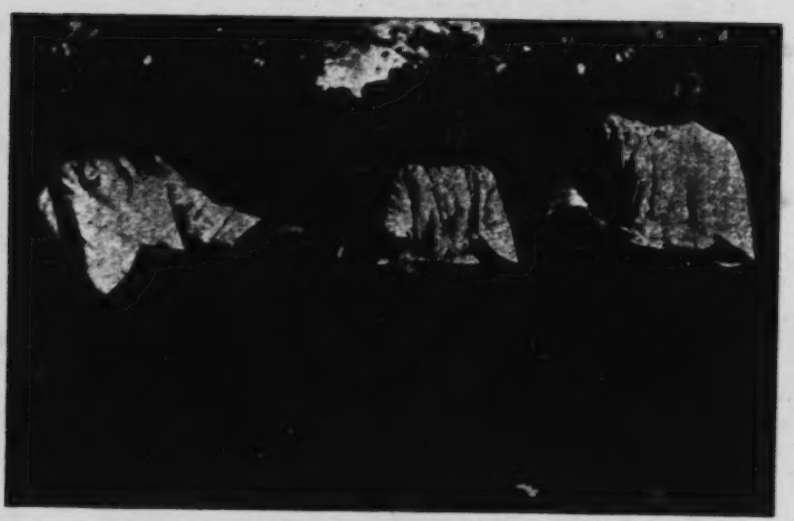
* J. G. Scott, *Burma. A Handbook*, pp. 121, ff.

19: Marshall M-5 (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

ordinary Karen comb, is made of strips of the outer shell of the bamboo, each about two inches long, and held together by a sealing-wax produced from the gum of a tree. The upper or pointed end of

A Bear's Tusk Comb

the comb is made small enough to be inserted into the open end of the tusk, where it is fixed in place with wax. (See *Frontispiece*, which shows how a comb is worn.)



Karen Girls in Burmese Costume
This illustrates the way in which the women secure their skirts by drawing them tightly to one side and then folding back the slack and tucking it in on the opposite side.

342 The houses of the Padaung, another Karen tribe--1911: 8,516--are quite similar. The
[301] Padaung women represent an amusing ethnographical parallel to the African Massai, with their solid heavy brass ornaments and their tremendous collars. Sometimes the Padaung form a village
[621] community together with the Yimbaw-Karen (24)

24. About Yimbaw-Karen see UBG, I, 1, p. 524.

as in the villages of Naungswe near Mobye on the Nam Pilu. The place looked cleaner to me than the Karenni villages and their houses were better constructed (Plate VII, 3). A round awning covers the veranda; the single inside room is used for cooking, living, and sleeping. In
[354] the center are two fireplaces which are sunk into the floor; on both sides are sleeping accommodations. Alongside the wall the floor is raised to form a low platform where vessels and all sorts of implements are kept. At the rear, to
[514] the right, a bamboo screen, reaching half way to the ceiling, partitions off a kind of toilet which is an opening in the floor.

101 The Gaungto--(Sawng-tung-Zayein-) Karen--
161 1911: 4,981--belong to a tribal group where
582 more or less severe endogamic marriage rules limit the establishment of families, and this in turn has resulted in a steady decrease of the population. Consequently, one frequently finds in their villages a large number of old maids and bachelors who were unable to find suitable mates for themselves. For example, I counted in one little village, consisting only of six houses, not more than four married couples, and their families. In addition, there was one widow, and four girls and four bachelors who, because of lack of money or because of the marriage rules, had to remain single.

344 The bachelor house, a customary institution
883